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# Security Council

Seventy-first year

*Provisional*

**7764**th meeting

Tuesday, 30 August 2016, 10.10 a.m.

New York

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| *President:* | Mr. Ibrahim | (Malaysia) |
| *Members:* | Angola | Mr. Lucas |
| | China | Mr. Shen Bo |
| | Egypt | Mr. Moustafa |
| | France | Mr. Lamek |
| | Japan | Mr. Okamura |
| | New Zealand | Mr. Taula |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Iliichev |
| | Senegal | Mr. Seck |
| | Spain | Mr. González de Linares Palou |
| | Ukraine | Mr. Ilnytskyi |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Mr. Wilson |
| | United States of America | Mr. Pressman |
| | Uruguay | Mr. Bermúdez |
| | Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) | Mr. Toro-Carnevali |

## Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2016/675)

Report of the Secretary-General on the progress made with regard to the stabilization of and restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau (S/2016/720)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The situation in Guinea-Bissau**

**Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2016/675)**

**Report of the Secretary-General on the progress made with regard to stabilization and restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau (S/2016/720)**

**The President**: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Guinea-Bissau and Timor-Leste to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, and His Excellency Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Brazil.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/675, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

I also wish to draw members attention to document S/2016/720, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made with regard to stabilization and restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, His Excellency Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Brazil, and His Excellency Mr. Luis Bermúdez, Deputy Permanent Representative of Uruguay and representative of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012), concerning Guinea-Bissau.

I now give the floor to Mr. Touré.

**Mr. Touré** (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak before the Security Council to present the report (S/2016/675) of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS). Today's meeting marks the second since the Security Council visited Bissau. As if there were a need to, that shows the particular and sustained attention that the Council accords to Guinea-Bissau.

As I address the Council, ongoing consultations are being pursued in order to break the deadlock prevailing in the People's National Assembly. The Assembly has yet to consider the Government's programme, although it has been in place for nearly three months. The normal legislative process, which should lead to the convening of a plenary session to discuss the programme, appears to be paralysed. Since its first unsuccessful meeting, on 28 July, the Standing Committee of the National Assembly, an organ that is designed to prepare, inter alia, the agenda of the plenary session, has been unable to meet owing to the decision of the majority party, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC), to suspend its participation in those efforts. Among the reasons that the PAIGC has given for that is the arrest of a member of Parliament with parliamentary immunity and the need to clarify the status of members of Parliament who were expelled by the party in January.

Faced by this impasse, the President of the National Assembly launched a mediation initiative between the parliamentary groups of the two main political parties, namely the PAIGC and the Party for Social Renewal (PRS). On 16 August, the President of the Assembly invited the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union and the United Nations to a meeting during which he shared the results of this initiative, his analysis of the situation and his proposal to end the crisis. He asked the organizations to convey his proposal.

The next day, representatives of those organizations and I met with President José Mário Vaz to discuss the opportunity of a dialogue that would be carried out with our support. The President of the welcomed the initiative

and assured us of his willingness to explore solutions that could help resolve the crisis. Subsequently, we conducted a series of consultations with all the political parties represented in Parliament, the Prime Minister, the Supreme Court, the group of 15 expelled PAIGC members of the Assembly, as well as civil society and religious and traditional leaders. The consultations sought to gather the views of national stakeholders on the current situation and explore solutions for a way out of the crisis.

Other steps have also been taken, which include compiling of a list of 57 signatures of members of Parliament, including those of the PRS, that was sent to the Speaker of the National Assembly on 22 August, to convoke a plenary session. Since 26 August, the PAIGC and PRS have started negotiations to reach consensus in order to end the political deadlock. We strongly welcome that initiative and count on the sense of responsibility of the leaders of both parties as well as that of the entire political class of Guinea-Bissau for a definitive way out of the crisis in the very near future. It is important to underscore that, in the absence of a programme bearing the imprimatur of those elected by the people, accompanied by a corresponding budget, it will be difficult for the Government to undertake essential reforms for the sustainable return to institutional stability and implement policies and strategies to boost inclusive economic growth and address the real problems of Guinea-Bissau, namely, combating poverty and improving the living conditions of the people.

(*spoke in English*)

As part of the efforts of UNIOGBIS to assist in resolving the political crisis, I have continued to engage with multiple stakeholders in furtherance of the Secretary-General's good offices, including through meetings with regional Heads of State to advocate for support to Guinea-Bissau. I also convened several meetings with ECOWAS, the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the European Union, as well as with key bilateral partners and national stakeholders, to promote the coordination of mediation efforts to break the political gridlock. I have been greatly encouraged by the commitment of all international partners to remain engaged in the country.

I am pleased to note the collective commitment by national stakeholders to engage in dialogue. The ongoing political impasse can, and must be, resolved. The parties to the crisis should be urged to honour their commitment to make the necessary sacrifices and concessions needed to end the parliamentary stand-off and put the Government machinery back on track. In that regard, I call upon the political leaders to put aside partisan considerations and focus on the national interests, as well as the welfare of the suffering population.

I am also pleased that the military continues to demonstrate restraint and neutrality in the face of the political stalemate. Many of them look forward to receiving pledged support for their demobilization and socioeconomic reintegration. For the sake of the stability of Guinea-Bissau, we must not fail them.

While addressing the current impasse remains the immediate priority, breaking the stalemate should also provide an opportunity for the political actors of Guinea-Bissau to reflect on ways of ending the recurrent cycle of institutional paralysis and ensuring sustainable stability. That can be achieved only through genuine and inclusive dialogue among the citizenry. Such an exercise has the potential to stabilize institutions and pave the way for tackling related priorities, including justice and reconciliation, the reform of the defence and security sectors and the fight against drug trafficking and other forms of transnational organized crime.

In that connection, it is heartening to note that preparations for the National Conference are on course. Earlier this month, a delegation of the Organizing Commission for the National Conference, with funding from the Peacebuilding Fund, visited Timor-Leste to learn from that country's experiences in national dialogue and transitional justice processes. That experience will no doubt feed into the impending dialogue.

As we all know, there is no development without stability. The path to stability in Guinea-Bissau will require a pragmatic and integrated approach. That means that, in addition to the current focus on achieving stability from the top down, we should also invest energy and resources to foster stability from the bottom up. To that end, I call upon the donor community to consider allocating more resources to the social sectors, including health and education, and to programmes that empower women and create opportunities for our youth.

The people of Guinea-Bissau are resilient, peaceful, decent and hard-working. All they aspire to is to improve their daily lot and overcome the harshness of poverty. Those aspirations should not be held back or constrained

by political contingencies. While we continue to work with the Bissau-Guineans for the return to full stability, we should design resilient policies and programmes for their benefit that would be impervious to fragility and instability. The people of Guinea-Bissau are counting on the support of the Security Council and that of the international community at large.

**The President**: I thank Mr. Touré for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. De Aguiar Patriota.

**Mr. De Aguiar Patriota**: At the outset of this briefing, I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for the invitation to address the Security Council today in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

I am grateful for, and welcome the comprehensive briefing delivered by, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, Mr. Modibo Touré, as it is most timely under the current circumstances. In addition to the information presented by Mr. Touré in his briefing, I wish to add a few elements on the basis of the discussions held in the PBC on 22 August, which we hope will be helpful for the Council's deliberations.

Guinea-Bissau has come a long ways since the coup d'état in 2012. The country has made important strides in regaining its footing towards democratization, and the progress achieved is now acknowledged by many, even amidst the situation in which the country remains trapped in a political impasse. Despite an undeniably fragile stability, national actors seem to understand that they must position themselves within the context of respect for the rule of law, the country's international legal obligations and the Constitution. We were reminded last week by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman, when he briefed the Guinea-Bissau configuration on his recent trip to Bissau, that the authorities in that country today no longer faced the dilemma they confronted in the wake of the 2012 coup d'état, when there was disagreement on who would legitimately represent the country's Government during that year's session of the General Assembly.

In equal measure, regional and international observers who were then divided on matters related to Guinea-Bissau are now aligned in supporting a strong development and stability agenda for the country. The consensus that today characterizes the oversight of the ongoing challenges in Guinea-Bissau, both in the PBC and in the Security Council, is something worth highlighting.

At the same time, the precarious political situation in Guinea-Bissau remains a source of concern to many in West Africa and beyond. In a region that has seen great progress in consolidating peace and stability through democratic means, Guinea-Bissau remains a weak link. I wish to use this opportunity to make a strong plea for collective efforts to help the national authorities of Guinea-Bissau find solutions to their governance problems. Options must be discussed as a matter of urgency. The longer the crisis is allowed to last, the more the progress achieved thus far risks being undermined, and perhaps even erased. We have well-founded worries that it would become harder to steer the country back on track if viable solutions are not found in the short term to render the governance of the country truly effective.

The PBC supports an inclusive and fruitful political dialogue, as stated in the press statement issued on 26 August by the PBC Guinea-Bissau country-specific configuration. That would be a positive step in paving the way for longer-term policies that the country requires, including a possible constitutional review. The PBC could assist those and other efforts — for example, by mobilizing constitutional experts who may be able to provide adequate advice, as required and in full respect for national sovereignty. In order to tackle longer-term issues, it would be up to the Bissau-Guineans to show wisdom and creativity to make their political constitutional model workable and adapted to their own specificities.

The PBC believes that every effort must be made by international partners to support the continuation of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB). We cannot afford to send the wrong signals regarding the importance of maintaining a safe and stable environment as remaining challenges are tackled. In that connection, I wish to acknowledge the role of the European Union's financial support to ensure the renewal of the mandate of ECOMIB in June of this year.

In conclusion, the PBC believes that the lack of genuine political will to overcome current impasses is preventing the enactment of Government measures that would lead to concrete peace dividends. The

PBC urges the political parties and, through them, all legislative actors to work together and urgently resume a constructive and cooperative dialogue in order to approve the Government's programme and the State budget. Without a national road map for policy and a budget to sustain a functional State, the country will be ill-positioned to receive support from the international community, despite the professed intentions to provide support. The PBC believes that the international community, including the Council, must strongly encourage regional diplomatic efforts, such as those agreed to at the forty-nineth ordinary meeting of the ECOWAS Heads of State gathering in Dakar in June. I look forward to an early dispatch of a high-level mission composed of the Presidents of Senegal, Sierra Leone and Guinea. President Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, as acting Chair of ECOWAS, has a leadership role to play in that regard. The PBC also encourages consultations aimed at organizing a meeting of the International Contact Group for Guinea-Bissau.

Finally, the PBC will continue impressing upon all actors the importance of upholding their commitments made at the Brussels donor round table in March 2015. That applies equally to the respective pledges from national and international stakeholders. A clear commitment to place the national interests above other agendas will be conducive to stronger partnerships between the Government and its international supporters. We therefore urge the national authorities to seek a path towards sustainable, constructive governance where dissent is channelled without holding hostage the country's institutional, social and economic development perspectives.

**The President**: I thank Mr. De Aguiar Patriota for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Bermúdez.

**Mr. Bermúdez** (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased to address the members of the Security Council in my capacity as representative of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012), concerning Guinea-Bissau. I would like to sum up the main aspects of the debate on the Secretary-General's report (S/2016/720) on the progress made with regard to the stabilization and restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau, held during the informal consultations of the Committee on 19 August.

This year's assessment was less encouraging than the one set out in the previous report (S/2015/619) of the Secretary-General, especially with regard to the political situation that has paralysed State institutions and led to the frustration felt among a number of international donors. The crisis impeded the Government from implementing significant reforms and weakened its ability to deal with issues such as crime, illicit trafficking and terrorism. Moreover, the situation also dissuaded international donors from fulfilling their pledges. However, the economic growth forecast for the country for 2016, the renewal of the mandate of the Economic Community of African States (ECOWAS) Mission in Guinea-Bissau and the uninterrupted efforts by regional and international actors were all positive factors that could contribute to putting an end to the crisis.

According to the report of the Secretary-General, United Nations sanctions continued to have a deterrent effect on the military, which did not become directly involved in the political life of the country. Nevertheless, the risk of intevervention on the part of military forces could increase if the political crisis were to persist, reforms of the relevant sectors were not undertaken and, in particular, if the precarious budgetary situation were to prevent the payment of the soldiers' salaries.

With regard to the sanctions imposed on 11 individuals, it was reported that at least four of them had travelled abroad — supposedly to receive medical treatment. Those trips, which took place in breach of the prohibition on travel, could have been justified on humanitarian grounds, which is one of the possible reasons for exemption that the Committee can grant. However, no such application was made.

The deep-rooted causes of Guinea-Bissau's problems continued to exist, and therefore the possibility of the country slipping back into instability and unconstitutional crisis could not be excluded. In that regard, the Secretary-General reiterated his recommendations of last year to maintain the sanctions regime and its criteria, send a firm message that sanctions would be imposed on all elements causing unrest, and, finally, adopt additional measures with an increase in designations. He also recommended considering the establishment of a group of experts and defining the parameters for the lifting of sanctions. The report also recommended that the Committee should consider the possibility of charging its Chair with visiting Guinea-Bissau and revisiting the issue of

the sanctions list, including updating it. A number of the members of the Committee felt that the assessment presented in the report was balanced and sound; however, some members expressed their deep concern about the deterioration in the political and econmic situation in Guinea-Bissau.

With regard to sanctions, some Committee members made positive comments in that the measures continued to be useful and effective. They also supported the continuation of the sanctions regime. Members also highlighted that sanctions were a means and not an end onto themselves.Therefore, they had to be adapted to the situation on the ground. Some members expressed concern about an expansive interpretation of the criteria for inclusion on the sanctions list and questioned its relevance.

With regard to the Secretary-General's recommendation of considering the possibility of establishing a group of experts, some members indicated that experts could help gather timely and useful information for the Committee's use, especially with regard to process for listing and delisting from the sanctions list. The Committee had already taken steps with regard to the potential revision of the sanctions list, including approving the sending of a letter to the Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau requesting proof concerning the death of Mr. Sanha Clussé, who apparently died in April. Some members also urged that Guinea-Bissau be sent the message that the Council remained vigilant and was closely following the development of the situation in the country.

In addressing the questions and observations of members, Mr. Kelvin Ong, Chief of the Security Council Subsidiary Organs Branch, who presented the report of the Secretary-General, and Mr. Antero Lopes, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Political Affairs in the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS), who joined the meeting from Bissau via video tele-conference, stated that the existing sanctions regime and criteria had already had a positive impact on the situation in Guinea-Bissau and that continuing the regime was already a strong message to the military to remain neutral. Moreover, the people of Guinea-Bissau viewed the continuation of the sanctions regime as a sign of interest and commitment on the part of the Council. With regard to the possible revision of the sanctions regime, they clarified that the criteria were sufficiently broad to include all possible elements of disruption to the constitutional order, independent of their affiliation. In that regard, a group of experts could provide timely, accurate and useful information and could help to increase awareness about Guinea-Bissau's problems.

With regard to terrorism, the Secretary-General reported that there were indications of recent terrorist activities involving recruitment by persons associated with Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Boko Haram and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in Western Africa, and that there was a risk for an increase in terrorist activities in Guinea-Bissau. Nevertheless, for the time being, there was not sufficient information to provide a clear picture of the situation.

There was also a recognition of the positive role played to date by the armed forces and its leaders. Nevertheless, concern was expressed about the fact that the military was gaining increasing popularity among the population owing to a visible lack of ability by the current Government to provide basic services, pay salaries and establish conditions for the international community to meet its pledges of financial contributions.

Lastly, with regard to mediation efforts by UNIOGBIS, it was confirmed that the Secretary-General's Special Representative was fully determined to meet with all interested national and international stakeholders to consider the situation, including with a view to facilitate the high-level presidential visit proposed by ECOWAS.

**The President**: I thank Mr. Bermúdez for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea-Bissau.

**Ms. Lopes D'Alva** (Guinea-Bissau): I thank you, Mr. President, for inviting my delegation to the Security Council table and for giving me floor. I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of August 2016.

On behalf of Ambassador João Soares da Gama, Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to the United Nations, and on behalf of my entire delegation, allow me to thank Mr. Modibo Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, for the briefing just presented and for his steadfast diligence on the political situation in my country since his arrival in Bissau. His efforts to bring all the relevant parties together for a common understanding as to the way forward in resolving the present crisis are very much appreciated. We also extend our gratitude to His

Excellency Ambassador António de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations and Chair of Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for his briefing and for his personal engagement, through PBC, for the cause of peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau. I would like also to thank the Deputy Permanent Representative of Uruguay, in his capacity as the representative of the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2048 (2012), for his briefing on the status of the sanctions regime in Guinea-Bissau. And I would like to thank the representative of Timor-Leste, who will speak in his capacity as Chair of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), for his statement and for all the support by the CPLP to Guinea-Bissau.

After the very comprehensive report and everything that has been said about the situation in Guinea-Bissau, I do not have much to add, but to request all the members of the Security Council to continue their support to our country and its people. The latest developments in the country in the past few days show that, finally, the main actors from the two major parties are engaged in an open dialogue towards reaching the needed consensus to restore the normal functioning of the national Parliament, which is an essential step to passing the national budget and to move the country ahead.

The latest visit by the Council to Guinea-Bissau, the visit of Under-Secretary-General Jeffrey Feltman and the recent diplomatic efforts led by the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau and other international organizations in the country have served to reassure Bissau-Guineans that they are not forgotten and that the international community remains engaged in helping us to bring peace and stability to our country.

Our people are aware that the major work towards peace and stability remains the primary responsibility of Bissau-Guineans. However, as the political crises persists and the socioeconomic situation in the country can no longer be sustained, the Council's presence, input and concrete actions vis-à-vis the people are urgently needed. We know that the full realization of the results and the pledges made at the Brussels round table conference on Guinea-Bissau, on which Bissau Guineans count so much, counting, are still pending — perhaps waiting for an enabling political environment in the country — but the suffering population cannot wait.

The renewal of the mandate of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mission in Guinea-Bissau for one more year, with the support of our partners to ECOWAS, is very much appreciated. However, we are very concerned about the news that after this year the Mission will be leaving Bissau. We hope that by then the country will find a way to walk by itself in terms of securing peace and that the military, which at the moment is out of the political scene in the country, will remain the same. Their attitude so far has been very professional, and we commend them for it. The international community's financial support to alleviate the immediate socioeconomic difficulties on the population is very important and much-needed at this moment.

In conclusion, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to our immediate neighbours, specially Senegal, which is a member of the Council, for their engagement through ECOWAS, as well as all partners and friends of Guinea-Bissau, for the continued support and assistance for peace and stability in our country.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

**Mr. Da Costa Freitas** (Timor-Leste): I would like to express our congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your presidency of the Security Council for the month of August, as well as to thank you for convening this meeting. I would also like to thank His Excellency Mr. Modibo Ibrahim Touré, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, for his briefing and for his efforts in assisting the country's authorities to resolve the crisis.

I am honoured to address the Security Council on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), whose members include Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal, São Tomé and Principe and my own country, Timor-Leste.

We welcome the two latest reports (S/2016/675 and S/2016/720) of the Secretary-General on Guinea-Bissau, whose recommendations we fully endorse.

The member States of the CPLP remain deeply concerned about the continuing political impasse and the overall situation in Guinea-Bissau. Of particular concern are the impacts on the provision of basic services to the population and the suspension of crucial reforms. The strains are already being felt, particularly

in the health and education systems and in the economic deprivation of Bissau-Guineans. We are deeply concerned that this could escalate into social tensions. We call on all the parties to engage in constructive dialogue and to create the conditions for the approval of the Government programme and a national budget, thereby exhibiting the necessary commitment towards long-term development in the country. That would lead to the much-needed lifting of the suspension on international cooperation aid.

The CPLP commends the concerted action of the international community and, in that regard, welcomes the decision by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Summit to renew the mandate of its Mission in Guinea-Bissau (ECOMIB). Its role in contributing to stability in Guinea-Bissau cannot be overstated. In that regard, we congratulate the European Union on its decision to provide funding assistance to ECOWAS. We are deeply concerned about the detrimental effects of an eventual withdrawal of ECOMIB before the security situation is guaranteed, and we urge international partners to consider ways by which we can continue to support peace and development in Guinea-Bissau.

We very much appreciate the briefing by Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman on his recent visit to Guinea-Bissau, given during a meeting of the Guinea-Bissau country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. For that and for his continued efforts, we also thank His Excellency Ambassador De Aguiar Patriota, Chair of the configuration.

We reiterate our call to all national stakeholders, namely, the organs of sovereignty, the political parties and civil society, to commit to constructive and inclusive dialogue, with respect for the Constitution, democratic principles and the rule of law. Statesmanship is required to resolve the political impasse and to move towards greater political stability and socioeconomic development, as well as for the protection and promotion of the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of all Bissau-Guineans.

**The President**: I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.*